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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Bless the Members of the people's House in these few days before so many Americans gather with families and loved ones in a season of good will toward all.

May that spirit pervade these Halls and Chambers, and may the work done and being done redound to the benefit of all, most particularly those whom You favor: the least among us.

As always, we pray that all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

REMEMBERING PENNSYLVANIA FFA'S PENNY BRAMMER

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Penny Brammer, who passed away last week after a courageous battle with breast cancer. She was 59.

Penny worked for the Pennsylvania FFA Association and was affectionately known as "Mama B" by the Commonwealth's youth leaders of agriculture. She inspired thousands of teenagers to have the passion and drive to pursue their dreams.

Penny is survived by her loving husband, high school and FFA sweetheart, Michael Brammer; her son and daughter-in-law, Greg and Jackie Brammer; her daughter and son-in-law, Sherisa and Jason Nailor; as well as her parents, George and Shirley Shaver. She also leaves her adored grandchildren: Terrin, Grace, Joleigh, Jordyn, and Jayce.

Mr. Speaker, my heart is heavy for the entire Brammer family, as well as for Penny's extended family at the Pennsylvania FFA Association and the

New Kingstown Volunteer Fire Company where Penny and Michael enjoyed years of fellowship and service to the community.

Penny dedicated her life to helping others, especially our youth. Her memory will live on in the hearts of all those whose lives she touched.

AMERICAN FAMILIES LEFT BEHIND AGAIN

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I guess for the second day in a row, this House voted for massive tax cuts for people at the very top and left behind a lot of working Americans. In fact, it gave permanent tax cuts to corporations and only temporary help for some American families. They said that the marketplace and corporations needed certainty. That is why those tax cuts were permanent.

Now, we have a continuing resolution for 28 days of funding after 11 months of not doing anything about it.

What about the certainty for veterans that they are going to get the healthcare that they deserve?

It is not a priority.

What about the certainty for children who depend on CHIP?

It is not a priority.

What about the certainty for those families who are struggling with a family member fighting opioid abuse?

All the promises ring hollow because they are not a priority. Corporations are the top priority. With this tax bill, and now the continuing resolution, the American people, who struggle every single day, are just not a priority. After 11 months of complete Republican control and false promises, American families get left behind again. It is a shame.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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ARKANSAS STATE CHRISTMAS TREE

(Mr. WESTERMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a truly talented group of students whose artistic abilities are on display here in our Nation's Capital.

Students from Washington Middle School and the South Arkansas Arts Center in El Dorado, Arkansas, designed ornaments adorning this year's Arkansas State Christmas tree on the Ellipse here in Washington, D.C.

The students used colored pencils, paper, markers, and glitter to create beautiful pieces of art which represent Arkansas' natural resources and economy.

I congratulate these students on highlighting the best of the Natural State in a truly wonderful way. I wish them, their families, and all of the Fourth District of Arkansas a Merry Christmas filled with joy and smiles, like I felt when I saw this remarkable art from home.

HONORING CAPTAIN F.W. "ROCCO" MONTESANO

(Mr. FARENTHOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Navy veteran and retiring Executive Director of the USS Lexington Museum on the Bay, Captain F.W. "Rocco" Montesano.

Following his graduation from the Naval Academy, Rocco served the U.S. Navy in numerous positions over his 30-year career, completing more than 5,500 flight hours and 900 carrier landings. From serving as commanding officer in aircraft squadrons to manpower director for the Chief of Naval Air Training, Captain Montesano has always shown his dedication and commitment to our country.

His bravery and service earned him many awards, including two Legion of Merit Medals, two Meritorious Service Medals, a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and five Sea Service Ribbons, amongst many others.

His service, however, did not stop when he retired from the Navy. In 1998, Captain Montesano became the Executive Director of the USS Lexington Museum on the Bay in Corpus Christi, where he served for 19 years.

Throughout his time as Executive Director, Rocco brought innovation and creativity to his position and did a phenomenal job maintaining and improving the museum that sits on Corpus Christi Bay. Through his patriotism, loyalty, and service, he holds true to the values of an American citizen and he inspires us all.

I thank Rocco for his commitment to our Nation. On behalf of everyone in

the 27th Congressional District of Texas, I wish him a happy retirement.

CHIP REAUTHORIZATION

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to once again implore this Congress to take bipartisan action to extend Federal funding of the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP.

In my home State of Pennsylvania, more than 176,000 children have gained access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare coverage through CHIP, providing them with age-appropriate medical and developmental care.

Since the program became law, the percentage of uninsured children nationwide has decreased by more than half, from 13.9 percent in 1997 to 6.6 percent in 2016.

As a result of its reliability and effectiveness, CHIP has consistently enjoyed strong bipartisan support. In September, I joined a bipartisan group from across Pennsylvania in urging leaders of both parties to take action to ensure that children have access to high-quality health insurance coverage during their formative years, a move we know yields an abundance of positive outcomes: fewer hospitalizations, increased earning power, and better healthcare outcomes as an adult.

While this Chamber has already taken action, passing legislation last month to fund CHIP, the Senate has yet to act. It is crucial we provide certainty and security for children, parents, and providers and move to sign into law CHIP extension legislation as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the time is now for the Senate to act.

REFORM FISA 702 PROGRAM

(Mr. MASSIE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, on December 31 of this year, the FISA 702 surveillance program expires.

Ostensibly, this program allows our intelligence agencies to spy on and stop terrorism. However, it is a well-known fact that the FBI has used this program as a back door to our Constitution to spy on Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues not to reauthorize this program before December 31 without significant reforms. We all took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution. We need to stay true to that oath and require the FBI to get a warrant if they want to go into the 702 database to surveil Americans.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of

rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 9 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1221

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 12 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 1370, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY BLUE CAMPAIGN AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4667, FURTHER SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 22, 2017, THROUGH JANUARY 7, 2018

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-477) on the resolution (H. Res. 670) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1370) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue Department of Homeland Security-wide guidance and develop training programs as part of the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4667) making further supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, for disaster assistance for Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and calendar year 2017 wildfires, and for other purposes; and providing for proceedings during the period from December 22, 2017, through January 7, 2018, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 21, 2017.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 21, 2017, at 9:25 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 31.
That the Senate passed S. 117.

That the Senate passed S. 501.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.